

SIGHTS AND SCENERY.

The Haymarket Theatre.—Mr. Webster has strengthened his company by the addition of Mrs. Stirling, Mr. L. Murray, and others. Mr. Vandenhoff and Miss Vandenhoff are to come. At the present moment, opera, with Miss Pyne for a charming *prima donna*, and roaring Buckstone-farces, alternating with some of the comedies of last season, fill the house. The scenic artists here should rub-up a little.

Princess's Theatre.—The production of the "Merry Wives of Windsor," in the costume of the reign of Henry IV., is a novelty. This play, for which, by the way, we care less than for any other that Shakespeare wrote, is essentially an Elizabethan play, and has always been dressed as such, notwithstanding that the "fat knight" had been assigned by the author to an earlier reign in other plays. As, at the Princess's Theatre, however, one of these earlier plays is running alternately with the "Merry Wives," the management were led to change the conventional period of the latter, and make it accord with the first. This has been done with very considerable success, although it does not follow that the date now given to the play will be retained in future when revived elsewhere: the construction and characters of the drama unquestionably belong to Shakespeare's own time. It is the same in some other of his plays, but a proper consideration of the subject would involve a longer disquisition than we may now attempt. Mr. Kean plays Ford well. For a pleasant little comedy, called "Tender Precautions, or the Romance of Marriage," capitalised by Mr. and Mrs. Keeley, and Mr. and Mrs. Wigan, a very complete room scene is provided, with all the fittings and elegances in the way of decoration which belong to the residence of a man well to do in the world.

Jullien's Concerts.—A rare night is Drury-lane Theatre every night,—filled up to the ceiling in every available corner to listen to good music at small cost. Preparations for the decoration of the house for the ensuing campaign are being made; we understand, in various workshops.

FOREIGN ARCHITECTURAL AND ARTISTICAL INTELLIGENCE.

Opening of the Cité Ouyrière (Napoleon) Paris.—This new undertaking, conducted by M. Aubled, architect, was opened on the 17th inst., with some appropriate festivity. The financial means have not been obtained but with some difficulty, and the part inhabited consists of 96 lodgings and some shops. The rents have been fixed at a little less than the usual price of similar dwellings in the neighbourhood, although the arrangements are much better; hence it appears to what undue height the whole present rent system has been pushed. The yearly rent of a lodging varies from 60f. to 180f. (2l. 8s. to 7l. 4s.). For the latter sum the accommodation consists of two rooms, well lighted and aired—in fact, comfortable and healthy—together with a small passage, where the kitchen is situated. The staircase also is laid out without stint of space, and affords a comfortable communication to all parts of the house. At present the Cité Ouyrière contains about 250 lodgers. The works of the other parts of the building are progressed with, and will contain a lavatory, baths, and other conveniences for the number of 500 lodgers, which is the full complement calculated upon. Those establishments founded in England on philanthropical grounds, seem to be a good speculation, and to yield an ample profit. The Cité Ouyrière of Paris will cost 650,000 francs, and will make an annual return of 40,000 francs. But our French contemporaries observe that in such cases, where the income is certain, and subject to no chance, Government should not allow the societies or companies erecting such houses to charge more than the usual interest of 5 per cent., whereby either the rents would become lower than they are now, or the accommodation superior, &c. After all, the Cité Ouyrière in Paris has contributed to the solution of a great

social problem, hitherto considered quite out of the reach of possibility, viz., that such and similar popular establishments will, if judiciously undertaken and honestly administered, yield an adequate return for the capital employed therein; and the sentiments pervading the speeches delivered at the opening of the Cité Ouyrière in Paris were to the purpose that such establishments may soon extend to Lyons, Bordeaux, Lille, &c., in fact, to all places where hitherto the people had to live in localities unfit and unworthy of men.

Florence.—Discovery of Frescos by Giotto.—Professor Charles Morelli, of Florence, having received from the friars of the church of Santa Croce, the order to execute some paintings in the chapel dedicated to St. Francis, belonging to the Giucciardini family, found under the layers of whitewash which he had to remove, the traces of the work of the above great master. This discovery was immediately communicated to the President of the Academy of Fine Arts, M. del Monte, as an event most propitious. In the meanwhile M. Morelli succeeded in disintombing, as it were, about twenty full length figures and several heads of saints, all bespeaking the character and genius of Giotto. What increases the importance of this discovery is the circumstance, that Vasari has accurately described this fresco, which represents scenes of the life of St. Francis. The work of completely uncovering this fine relic is in active operation.—M. Durand, a skilful French designer, is preparing an Archaeological Album of Tuscany, which will comprise the finest monuments of the Florentine Commonwealth, designed in a superior style. It is the Russian Prince Demidoff, under whose patronage this gem of art-production is undertaken.

The New "Granarium," Frankfurt-on-the-Maine.—This new edifice, destined as a general *entrepôt* of the German and Dutch English corn trade, is in a fair progress. The Chamber of Commerce of Frankfurt have proposed to the Senate to guarantee the loan of 300,000 florins (29,000l.) at four per cent. for the erection of this great building. M. Rigaud, the projector of the Granarium, has just published a pamphlet, explaining the advantages of position, &c. Frankfurt lies in the axis of the whole German railway net not distant from the Rhine, as well as near the Maine and Ludwig's canals, whose shippers will find a return-freight at Frankfurt, this being a great *entrepôt* for British and colonial goods. The building is to be erected on the bank of the Maine, near the Western line terminus.

THE STATIONERS' COMPANY'S ALMANACS.

Last Saturday (22nd) was what was called "Almanac Day" at Stationers' Hall, when thousands upon thousands of those useful companions were sent off east, west, north, and south; and by this time have been distributed amongst gentle and simple far and wide. For a long time this company had nearly a monopoly of learning, but are now only publishers of almanacs, and even as to these have not the exclusive privilege. Charles Knight, who has sketched the history of the company in his "Cyclopædia of London," tells how that one Carnan, in St. Paul's-churchyard, at the close of the last century, would insist upon his right to publish an almanac in spite of the company, and was annually thrown into prison for so doing. This became so regular a thing that he always kept a clean shirt in his pocket, ready for a decent appearance before the magistrates and the keepers of the gaol at Newgate. Ultimately he gained the battle, and opened the trade.

The company, however, still remain pre-eminent in this department, and their publications command an enormous sale, and bring a large revenue. The number of freemen is between 1,000 and 1,100; of the livery about 450. The proprietary consists of a portion of the latter, who hold shares, about 350 in number, representing a capital of about 40,000l. A share may be bequeathed to a widow, but no further. As the shares fall in, they are ap-

portioned nominally by election, but virtually in order of seniority.

We have before us a bundle of their new calendars, "The Englishman's and Family Almanack" (containing much useful information), "Goldsmith's Almanac," "The Gardener's Almanack" (a capital publication, edited by Mr. G. W. Johnson), "Moore's Almanac improved," and last, not least, no doubt, in their estimation, Moore's "Vox Stellarum." We should scarcely have expected to have found in the 19th century an almanack put forth by a grave City company, containing such predictions as we find therein; but we suppose the company take a business view of the question, and that the enormous sale of the almanac, about 400,000 copies, is their excuse for so doing. With this blot we find much that is useful, especially to our country readers.

EXPERIMENTS ON THE STRENGTH OF WROUGHT OR ROLLED IRON JOISTS.

Messrs. Fox and Bakker have just introduced rolled iron joists as a substitute for cast-iron in the construction of their fire-proof floors, designed with a view to bring the expense to the same as those of cast-iron, and thus render fire-proof construction with joists of wrought-iron as inexpensive, according to their statement, as the ordinary timber floors.

On the 25th, some experiments were made on joists of two sizes, at the Baths and Wash-houses which are now being erected for the parish of St. James, in Dufourey's-place, Poland-street. The weight was applied through a lever. The following particulars have been furnished to us.

The smaller of the two joists was 5½ in. deep, and ½ in. thick, with flange top and bottom, 1½ in. wide.

Length of joist..... 17 ft. 0 in.
Width of bearing..... 16 0

Weight per foot run..... 104½ lb.

Load on Centre.	Deflection.	Weight per sq. ft. of floor which the load is equivalent to.
12 cwt.	65.....	112 lb. per ft.
15	78	140 ..
18	110	168* ..
28	145.....	260† ..

The larger joist was 7 in. deep, and ¾ in. thick, with flange top and bottom, 2½ in. wide.

Length of joist..... 17 ft. 0 in.
Width of bearing..... 16 0

Weight per foot run..... 16½ lb.

Load on Centre.	Deflection.	Weight per sq. ft. of floor which the load is equivalent to.
12 cwt.	0.42	112 lb. per ft.
28785	280 ..
329	300* ..
40	1.1	370† ..

HARRISON'S ELECTRO-MAGNETIC ENGINE.—This patented engine is said to act "on the principle of the induced magnetic power of a compound coil or coils of insulated wire conveying a current of galvanic electricity, which acts upon and draws within a suitable aperture, or repels therefrom, a plate or a series of plates of soft iron, or a body of wire, or permanent steel magnets." Two important advantages are said to be gained by this arrangement. 1, in altogether avoiding the retarding influence of electro-magnets acting on each other after the battery current has been cut off; 2, that the effect of secondary currents is very much reduced; and where permanent magnets are employed to pass within the coils, the induced current augments the primary current, and thus a considerable saving in the consumption of the materials of the battery is effected. The patentees point out other advantages, and they assert that they obtain motive power as cheap or cheaper a rate, and much more advantageously, than by steam.

* Up to this point the elasticity of the metal was unaltered.

† Permanent set on removal of load, .078. A load of 18 cwt. on the centre was left on 18 hours, but produced scarcely any perceptible difference.

‡ Permanent set on removal of load, .002.